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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/518,548	07/11/2006	Tomohisa Takahashi	264194US90PCT	6822
22850 7590 06/11/2009 OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314				
EXAMINER WEDDELL, ALEXANDER MARION				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1792				
NOTIFICATION DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
06/11/2009		ELECTRONIC		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

patentdoCKET@oblon.com
oblonpat@oblon.com
jgardner@oblon.com

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/518,548

Applicant(s)

TAKAHASHI, TOMOHIKA

Examiner

ALEXANDER WEDDLE

Art Unit

1792

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 January 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 03 January 2005 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 04/04/2005, 07/06/2005, 03/20/2006, 05/22/2006, 02/06/2007, 04/30/2007, 10/19/2007, 07/29/2008, 04/27/2009.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. Figures 1-2, 5, and 6 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). Corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Horikawa et al. (EP 449556).

Horiwaka et al. (EP'556) teach a sealing material with a viscosity within the recited range (p. 4, lines 38-40).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148

USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining

obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

6. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sander (US 2002/0100994) in view of Horikawa et al. (EP 449556).

Regarding Claim 1, Sander (US'994) teaches a method for manufacturing ceramic monoliths, such as catalytic converters for catalytically treating the exhaust gas of internal combustion engines (Abstract; par. 0002), Comprising the steps of applying a sealing material to the outside surface of the ceramic monolith (pars. 0015, 0018) and scraping the exterior surface of the ceramic monolith with a calibrating ring, which moves relative to the exterior surface of the ceramic monolith to both strip away excess seal material from the outer surface and to provide a smooth seal surface coating (par. 0019). A person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention would have recognized that the ring would spread (*i.e.*, "expand") the sealing material over the entire exterior face of the ceramic monolith as it moved relative to the surface in order to smooth the surface.

US'994 is silent as to a honeycomb member. Horikawa et al. (EP'556) teach a process for producing a ceramic honeycomb structural body as a "ceramic monolith" in catalytic converters for treating the exhaust gas of internal combustion engines (Abstract; p. 2, lines 1-4). It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to practice the process of US'994 with a pillar-shaped porous honeycomb ceramic monolith, because EP'556 suggests that the coating should be uniformly spread over the outer periphery of the structural member as provided by US'994 to provide an adequate ceramic honeycomb structure (p. 4, lines 8-10).

Regarding Claim 2, US'994 is silent as to the cross-sectional geometry of the ceramic monolith. EP'556 teaches that the cross-section of a honeycomb member or structure may be other than round (p. 5, lines 1-3). It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the process of US'994 by using a different cross-sectional geometry, because US'556 suggests that such cross-sectional geometry provides adequate ceramic honeycomb bodies as catalytic filters.

7. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over MacNeill (US 5,385,873).

MacNeill (US'873) teaches a sealing material comprising an inorganic filler and an inorganic binder (col. 2, lines 2-29). US'873 discloses that the inorganic binder is a high-aspect ratio (high length to diameter) vermiculite with an aspect ratio of about 10 or more. US'873 teaches that the ceramic fibers are long with small diameters, (*i.e.*, high aspect ratio). US'873 is silent as to the aspect ratio of the inorganic filler. It would have

been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to prepare the composition of US'873 with ceramic fibers with an aspect ratio within the range of that of the vermiculite with a reasonable expectation of success.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ALEXANDER WEDDLE whose telephone number is (571) 270-5346. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Kornakov can be reached on (571)272-1303. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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/A. W./
Examiner, Art Unit 1792
/Michael Kornakov/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1792